

海竜祭の夜

——妖怪ハンター——

諸星大二郎

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NIGHT OF THE SEA MONSTERS FESTIVAL

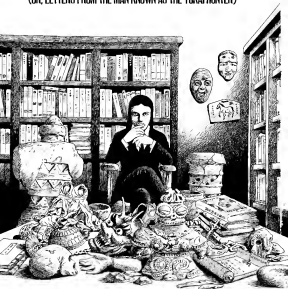
YOKAI HUNTER

BY MOROHOSHI DAJIRO



FROM THE FIELD NOTES OF HIEDA REIJIRO

(OR, LETTERS FROM THE MAN KNOWN AS THE YOKAI HUNTER)



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CHAPTER 1: NIGHT OF THE SEA DRAGON'S FESTIVAL

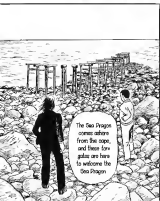




One of the students who attended my course in university was a young man from Kam Island. I visited that island not because of the legend of the Taro Clan, but out of interest in their Sea Dragon's Festival.









SOME ON
HORSEBACK AND
SOME ROWING IN
BONTS, EACH THEN
LEAVING HIS HOME
IN THE WAY HE
THOUGHT BEST—



THOSE OF THE
HEIKE WHO FLED FROM
THE CAPITAL WERE; THE
FORMER MINISTER OF THE
INTERIOR MUNEMORI, TAIRA
DAMNAGON TOKITADA, TAIRA
CHUNAGON NORIMORI—



Here on the small
island, we can't
escape the sea—



No.
That's
just how
it's always
been—

Is there some
reason that the
Sea Dragon's
Festival is held
on the 14th day
of the third
month on the
old calendar?



We can only
pray to the
Dragon God
every year—

We can't
escape
the
island—



Oh,
no, I'm
sight.

A lot of the young folk leave for
the mainland, but about half of
them come back to the island—
How would you like another cup?



The next day, the
festival preparations
began without any
particular excitement
or anticipation—









Y-YOU'RE
RIGHT! HIS
FINGER WAS
BITTEN OFF
BY A MONST!

THAT'S
KATSU-
KORI'S
HAND!



LOOK
AT THAT...
IT'S RISING!
IT'S LITTLE
FINGER!

T...
THAT'S
A HUMAN
HAND!



He was
cursed for
stealing the
Sea Dragon

EH?
Of Katsi's
coming!

He's been
dragged to the
depths by the
Sea Dragon.
No wonder his
body never
surfaced



EH?
Let's go back
home. Ma
I'll pick up
Katsi's hand
Come on,
let's go

Isn't return
There are
promotions
of his return



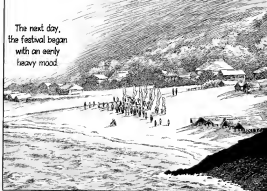
This is indeed
Katsi's hand.
His return has
come!

AT AKAMA-GA-
SEKI BEGAN THE
FINAL BATTLE OF
THE MINAMOTO
AND TAIRA...



AND SO, ON THE
TWENTY FOURTH
DAY OF THE THIRD
MONTH OF THE
SECOND YEAR OF
GENRYAKU, AT THE
HOUR OF THE HARE...

The next day,
the festival began
with an eerily
heavy mood.



It began with a recitation of the
"Tales of the Taira" directed towards the sea.



AFTER THE POT
SPICES SET THEIR
FACES AGAINST EACH
OTHER AND FOUGHT
SERIOUSLY WITHOUT A
THOUGHT FOR THEIR
LIVES, NEITHER
GIVING WAY TO
PAIN.







WHEN SUDDENLY
SOMETHING THAT
THEY AT FIRST
TOOK FOR A
WHITE CLOUD...



When the sea
dragon comes
ashore, it goes
through the first
gate, and into the
fish. When it goes
through the next
first gate, there
is another fish
waiting for
it.



We breach the palace of the
Sea God, who dwells at the
bottom of the ocean plane! We
come with offerings of fish,
with fire wide and narrow.



And after it
goes through
each of the
first gates, it
winds up back
in the ocean...



I suppose
I could under-
stand why they
would fear a
god that would
curse those who
look upon it.

So it's not so
much a festival
to welcome the
Sea Dragon,
but to send
it away.









In 186, the Taro Clan was defeated at Pannoria. Emperor Artolia, carried by the Lady Ma, was plunged into the sea with the three divine sacred treasures. Of these, the sacred sword was never found.



THE ONE WHO PROMISED AT PANNORIA WITH THE HEART OF THE TARA CLAN, WHEN HE WAS ONLY EIGHT YEARS OLD. IT

YOU HEAR EMPEROR ARTOLIA?



That's right! The 26th day of the first month on the old calendar is the anniversary of Emperor Artolia's death. But, about the Emperor... do of Pannoria?

We are connected by the sea...



The year, we will not escape. No one will escape.

Lord Artolia has sent his forewarning, and I have returned. The sacred sword.



The island cannot escape his return. And we cannot escape from the island.



THEY MUST'VE COLLAPSED IN THE EARTHQUAKE THAT HELD THE OCEAN DRAGON WON'T RETURN TO SEA!



OH, NOW THE TOWN GATES HAVE FALLEN DOWN!





SOME WERE
DROWNED,
AND SOME
SET ADrift...



AND THE
SHIPS OF
THE TAIRA
VANISHED
WITHOUT
A TRACE...



I...IT'S
LORD
ANTOKU!!!

THE BATTLE
OF THE
MINAMOTO
AND TAIRA
ENDED...



AND
THUS,
ON THAT
DAY...

DON'T
PANIC!
THAT'S
JUST A
SEA
SNAKE!



IT'S
EMPEROR
ANTOKU!

EMPEROR
ANTOKU
HAS GONE
FOR US!





YOU HAVE BEEN
REIGNING TO THE
IMPERIAL THRONE
IN THIS WORLD,
YET DESTINY
NOW CLAIMS
YOU!



WHAT
ARE
THOSE
WAVES?

THEN THE LADY KEE
PUT THE SACRED
JEWEL UNDER HER
ARM, AND THE SACRED
SWORD IN HER
GIRDLE, AND TAKING
THE EMPEROR IN
HER ARMS, SPONS
THIS...



BLINDED
WITH TEARS
THE CHILD-
SOVEREIGN
PUT HIS BEAU-
TIFUL LITTLE
HANDS TO-
GETHER, AND
REPEATED THE
KENMUTSU!



THE EM-
PEROR
WAS
EIGHT
YEARS
OLD THAT
YEAR.

STAY
AWAY FROM
THE BEACH!
IT'S A TORMENT
GET UP ON
THE HILL!



AH, THE PITY OF IT! THAT
THE GUST OF THE SPRING WIND
OF IMPERMANENCE SHOULD SO
SUDDENLY SWEEP AWAY HIS
FLOWER FORM THAT THE CRUEL
BILLOWS SHOULD THUS ENGULF
HIS JEWEL PERSON.

THE LADY NI, HOLDING
HIM TIGHTLY IN HER ARMS
AND SAYING CONSOLINGLY,
"IN THE DEPTHS OF THE
OCEAN WE HAVE A CAPITAL,"
SANK WITH HIM AT LAST
BENEATH THE WAVES.

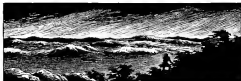


LORD
ANTOKU!
PLEASE,
SPARE US!!





*References: "Japanese Classic Literature Compendium: Tales of the Time" (Genshou Publishing)



AN EARTHQUAKE STRUCK, ITS EPICENTRE
DEEP WITHIN THE OCEAN NEAR KAMI ISLAND.
THE TSUNAMI DID MINIMAL DAMAGE TO THE
MAINLAND, BUT ONLY A HANDFUL OF THE
NEARLY ONE HUNDRED RESIDENTS OF
THE ISLAND SURVIVED. THESE SURVIVORS
LEFT THE ISLAND TO LIVE WITH THEIR
RELATIVES ON THE MAINLAND, AND
THE ISLAND BECAME UNINHABITED.





NIGHT OF THE SEA DRAGON'S FESTIVAL

YOKAI HUNTER

BY MOROHOSHI DAIIJIRO

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